



To: CINMS Advisory Council

From: Linda Krop, Conservation Representative

Re: Conservation Working Group Report, 11/17/05

The Conservation Working Group (CWG) met on November 16, 2005. Members present: Linda Krop, Chair (Environmental Defense Center); Greg Helms, Vice Chair (The Ocean Conservancy); Jean Holmes (League of Women Voters of Santa Barbara); Jim Knowlton (Ocean Futures).

Other participants included Shiva Polefka (EDC Marine Conservation Analyst), John Dutton, Gail Osherenko and Steve Shimek.

I. INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were made.

II. FEDERAL MARINE RESERVES

Greg Helms reported on the status of the proposed expansion of marine reserves within the Sanctuary. He discussed the NOAA decision regarding the respective roles of the Sanctuary and the PFMC, as well as the most recent PFMC decision to refuse to draft regulations for the Sanctuary portion of the reserves and instead attempt to incorporate marine reserves into its various fishery management plans. We are waiting for NOAA's response. A potential result is that NOAA will consider PFMC's response inadequate and direct the Sanctuary to draft its own regulations. We are now waiting for the Sanctuary's Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

III. □ CWG AQUACULTURE REPORT

Linda announced that EDC has begun work on a report analyzing potential risks and impacts from open ocean aquaculture. John Dutton, an intern at EDC, reviewed an outline of the report, which will cover topics similar to our previous reports on noise pollution and water quality. In sum, the report will review environmental and socioeconomic issues of concern, as well as the current regulatory and policy framework, and propose management recommendations. John and Sean Hastings will check in with Jim Sullivan to inquire about the status of the National Marine Sanctuary Program's work on the issue.

IV. □ SAC MEETING ISSUES OF INTEREST

- A. SAC WORK PLAN: We reviewed the 2005 Work Plan and Status Report.

Marine Reserves: all items appear to still be relevant. Item #4 (increase understanding of PFMC) is proving to be very challenging.

Management Plan: we are still waiting for the Draft Plan and EIS; we are not sure what will happen with the Biogeography Study in 2006.

Water Quality: we noted possible follow-ups to the approval of the Water Quality Needs Assessment, including (1) a report back from the Sanctuary Manager; (2) possible establishment of a Water Quality Working Group; and (3) opportunity to work with Regional Water Quality Coordinator. A question was raised as to whether the new regionalization of the Pacific Sanctuaries will affect the CINMS Water Quality program.

Marine Acoustics: we encourage the Sanctuary to continue pursuing monitoring and other report recommendations.

Liquid Natural Gas: we recommend expanding this category to “Energy Projects” and include offshore oil and gas activities, wave energy, and wind farms (offshore and on the Islands). We also recommend inviting additional speakers on LNG as well as on these other topics. We would like the Sanctuary to invite Bill Powers (of the Border Power Plant Working Group) to speak to the Sanctuary regarding the need for LNG.

Aquaculture: the CWG is working on a report on aquaculture, as mentioned above. We are also wondering what is happening with the NMSP headquarters assessment.

- B. SANCTUARY OIL & GAS RESOLUTION: the CWG voted to support the proposed resolution.
- C. SEA OTTER TRANSLOCATION PLAN: we discussed the City Council hearing.